129. Shri S.C. Gossain, IPS (West Bengal)

130. Shri A.J. Anandan, IPS (Karnataka)

131. Shri K.V. Rajagopalan Nair, IPS (Kerala).

Plant Load Factor

735. SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering any plan to raise the Plant Load Factor (PLF) to all thermal power stations to an average of 70% by the year 2002 A.D.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) (a) and (b) As per consensus reached at the Chief Ministers Conference held in December, 1996, it is proposed to improve PLF of Power Stations in State Sector to a minimum level of 65% and the national average PLF to 70% by 2002 A.D.

Fast Track Power Project

736. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Ministry had set December 31, 1996 as the deadline for issuing the pending counter guarantees for the fast track power projects;

(b) if so, whether in view of this the centre had reopened the entire power projects agreement of the Hinduja National Power Company Project at Visakhapatnam and has called for fresh negotiations;

(c) whether the power Ministry had received a report prepared by an international consultant which had been appointed to study the power projects agreements of the fast track power projects; and

(d) if so, the time by which the final agreement for renegotiating the Vizag Power Plant is to be considered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Norms for IDSMT Scheme

737. SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the norms prescribed to project towns for development under the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) Scheme;

(b) the number of towns brought under the Scheme so far, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government propose to continue the scheme during Ninth Plan;

(d) if so, the towns proposed to be brought under the Scheme in Rajasthan and other States during the Ninth Plan; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U.VENKATESWARLU): (a) The Scheme of Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) is applicable to towns which fulfil the following norms:

(i) having population upto 5 lakhs as per 1991 Census;

(ii) having potential to emerge as regional centres of economic growth and employment;

(iii) having elected local bodies.

In the selection of towns, preference will be given to Headquarters of Districts followed by mandi towns and industrial growth centres (excluding industrial estates) (identified by the Ministries of Agriculture and Industries respectively), tourist places, pilgrim centres, etc. The State Government shall identify towns in order of priority in accordance with their State Urban Development Strategy.

(b) Information is furnished in the Statement enclosed.

(c) to (e) Identification and selection of priority towns for development under IDSMT Scheme vests with the State Governments, and projects are approved by the State Level Sanctioning Committees. As such it is not possible to indicate at this stage the towns which will be covered under IDSMT during Ninth Plan period.

Statement

Number of Towns Covered under IDSMT Scheme (From 1979-80 to 24th February, 1997)

Sl.No.	Name of State/UT	No.of Towns Covered
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	68
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	4
3.	Assam	19
4.	Bihar	35
5.	Goa	6
6.	Gujarat	48
7.	Haryana	12
8.	Himachal Pradesh	5
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	8
10.	Karnataka	73
11.	Kerala	30